

'THE SAGE'--JANUARY 2008
Klein's Floral & Greenhouses On-Line Newsletter

Klein's Floral & Greenhouses is proud to announce that our own Rick Halbach is one of the featured writers in the 2008 Wisconsin Garden Journal put out by the Madison Area Master Gardeners Association. Rick's very informative introductory article discusses container gardening and year round interest.

JANUARY STORE HOURS:

Monday thru Friday : 8:00-6:00

Saturday: 8:00-5:00

Please note that we will be closed Sundays during January

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

January 1--New Year's Day. HAPPY 2008!

January 10--Islamic New Year

January 12 & 13--The Wedding Planner and Guide Bridal Show at the Alliant Energy Center. (And don't forget to set up your wedding consultation now for any 2007 wedding. Our schedule fills up fairly quickly. Klein's talented team of designers can make your wedding day a perfect one. Call Kathy at 608/244-5661). From start to finish, everything needed for that special day \$ at the show with over 200 vendors offering products and services catering to your needs. Make sure to get a seat for the daily fashion show at noon and 3pm. Open on Saturday from 10am to 5pm and Sunday from 11am to 5pm, tickets are \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door. Visit www.wedplan.com for tickets and more information.

January 21--Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Mid January--Seeds begin arriving for retail sale from Northrup King, Livingston and Olds. Believe it or not, it's time to start thinking about spring planting. If starting your own seeds at home, some like lisianthus, geraniums, pentas and bananas should be started now so they are ready for spring planting.

January 22--Full Moon

Late-January--The summer bulbs like begonias and elephant ears begin arriving for retail sale. Shop early for the best selection.

Late-January--Ever thought about working at a greenhouse? Now is the time to stop in and ask if we'll be hiring for spring and pick up an application. We always need temporary, parttime counter help in the spring and greenhouse production swings into gear by midFebruary. If you're interested, ask for Jennifer for the retail area or Jamie for the greenhouses. Benefits include a generous discount on all those plants you buy at Klein's anyway. Join our team and experience how it's all done.

February 8-10--Wisconsin Public Television's Garden Expo at the Alliant Energy Center. Please join us. Tickets will be available at Klein's for a lesser price than at the door. Details available at wpt.org/garden.

February 14--Valentine's Day. Order early for guaranteed delivery. We deliver throughout Madison and most of Dane County.

'THE FLOWER SHOPPE':

If ever you've received a floral arrangement from Klein's containing a large, perfectly shaped, white and slightly fragrant calla lily, it's quite likely one of Klein's very own famous *Zantedeschia aetheopica*. Beginning in late December and early January, the Klein's calla lilies begin putting on a show that will last for months to come, producing hundreds of longstemmed tropical and provocative blooms.

The Klein's callas have a long history. In fact, the tuberous rhizomes are generations old, stemming back from a time when the Klein greenhouses themselves supplied many of our flower shop's fresh cut flowers. The actual variety has long been forgotten, but thankfully the means to get them to rebloom reliably from year to year has not. During the productive winter months, you'll find the huge plants in the rear of our Number 2 Showroom where temperatures are kept at a cool 50 degrees. Though callas generally require liberal watering, we keep them rather dry in these cool conditions in order to control stem and root rot. In addition, the cooler temperatures keep the vigorous foliage more controlled and the flower stalks shorter. The added stress, as with most plants, also stimulates better blooming.

Once temperatures inside the showroom warm up in late spring, the flowering slows and the foliage becomes long and spindly. At that time we also need more space in the retail area for our spring annuals. It's in mid-April that the large tubs of callas are moved to our back greenhouses to spend the summer. During May and June we cut back drastically on the watering in order to send them into complete dormancy. During the summer months they are left bone dry. By this time the foliage will have withered away and been removed.

Then in late August the cycle begins anew. We split and transplant the rhizomes into new tubs and top dress them with a layer of composted manure or rich soil. We then move them back into their winter home at the back of Number 2 Showroom and start watering them as normal. Within weeks, dense, bright green foliage emerges from the seemingly lifeless pots and a few months later the plants send up their hundreds of gorgeous blooms. Though expensive, each bloom grown at Klein's is still less expensive and of far superior quality than those supplied by our wholesalers. In fact, we actually supply some of the wholesalers with our overstock each season, perhaps appearing in one of our competitors' bouquets.

And by the way, though frequently asked, the plants are not for sale.

DID YOU KNOW. . .

. . . that Klein's is now part of the Dane Buy Local initiative. We've joined hundreds of other area businesses and civic leaders who are encouraging you to buy local.

The Top 5 Reasons for Buying Local:

1. Keep Madison original. We ensure that unique, one-of-a-kind businesses survive.
2. Enrich the community economy. Each time money is spent at a locally-owned business, the tax stays in Dane County to support local resources such as schools, parks, police and fire...and much more.
3. Provide more jobs. All together, locally owned independent businesses are our largest employer.
4. Ensure a solid foundation for local nonprofit organizations who serve us. Locally owned businesses give more.
5. Create good places to work: We want work life to reflect home town friendliness and familiarity. Treating our employees well is part of our community commitment.

(from the Dane Buy Local web site at www.danebuylocal.com)

Buy Local Gift Cards Are Now Available.

- These gift cards can make great holiday gifts.
- Can be purchased for any denomination from \$25.00 \$250.00.
- Cards are available at any of the 5 branches of Home Savings Bank.
- Any merchant who accepts VISA can accept gift cards.

Please contact Home Savings Bank at 282-6000 with questions or for a location near you. There's one just next door to Klein's at 3762 E. Washington Ave.

Visit the Dane Buy Local web site for a complete list with links to all participating businesses and organizations. And Buy Local!

KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH--These are a selection of relatively simple recipes chosen by our staff. New recipes appear monthly. Enjoy!!

Just a few weeks ago many of the local CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farms sent out their last shipments of vegetables from the 2007 gardening season. These storage share shipments most commonly include potatoes, carrots, beets, daikon radish, celeriac, leeks, rutabaga, cabbage, garlic and, of course, onions. Following are some of Klein's tried and true favorites that all onion lovers will enjoy. These recipes are a great way to use up any overstock quickly.

ONION CROSTINI--A new favorite from a recent copy of Everyday with Rachel Ray . A fragrant and belly warming appetizer that will compliment any meal.

1/4 cup + 2 TBS. extra virgin olive oil
6 yellow onions (2 lbs.), thin sliced
1 tsp. dried thyme
salt and pepper to taste
24 baguette slices
2 cups shredded Swiss cheese

In a large kettle, warm the 1/4 cup olive oil on mediumlow. Add the onions and thyme and cook, stirring every 10 minutes for 1 1/2 hours, adding a splash of water if they start to stick. Season with salt and pepper. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Arrange the bread on a cookie sheet, brushing both sides with the remaining oil. Season if desired with salt and pepper. Bake until crisp, 10-15 minutes. Place 1 TBS. cheese on each toast and bake 5 minutes or until melted. Top each toast with the caramelized onions and serve warm.

ONION TART (Zwiebelkuchen)--A very easy family recipe from the south of Germany. Serve with a sweet German Auslese, Mosel or Franken wine. Flavors of this tart are very mellow and sweet.

1/2 cup + 1 TBS. butter
1 3/4 cup flour
1 egg, lightly beaten
3-5 TBS. half and half
salt to taste
3 large or 4 medium sweet onions, thinly sliced
4 slices bacon, diced
1/2 cup whipping cream
2 more eggs
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease a standard, sided cookie sheet or jelly roll pan (10"x 15" or similar). Mix together the flour and the butter with a pastry blender or fork. Stir in the 1 egg, the half and half and some salt to make a dough. Allow to stand in a cold place for a few minutes. Fry the diced bacon in a large skillet over medium heat until golden but not crisp. Add the onions and sauté until tender, stirring often. Drain any fat.

In a bowl, beat together the cream, 2 eggs and salt and pepper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pastry. Line the bottom of the prepared pan with the pastry. Prick the pastry with a fork. Spread the onion mix over the pastry. Pour the cream mixture over all. Cover the pan with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove the foil and bake another 10-15 minutes, until set and lightly golden. Cut into squares and serve warm.

RICK'S FAVORITE ONION SOUP--This delicious French Onion Soup is super easy and to-die-for with

homemade garlic croutons (recipe follows). Flavors are sweet and intense. The sherry adds both flavor and character. The source is unknown.

5 cups thinly sliced white or yellow onions
6 TBS. butter
1 quart beef, chicken or vegetable broth
1 TBS. tamari (Japanese soy sauce) or any soy sauce
3 TBS. dry sherry or white wine
1/2 tsp. dry mustard
a dash of dried thyme
1-2 tsp. salt to taste
fresh black pepper
2 cloves minced garlic
1-2 tsp. honey
shredded mozzarella, provolone or Swiss cheese

Cook the onions in the butter with the garlic, the thyme and a little salt in a large kettle over medium-low heat until tender and starting to brown. Cook gradually and thoroughly. This maintains the sweetness. It'll take about 45 minutes. Add the mustard and mix well. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook, covered over medium-low for at least 30 minutes. Serve with croutons and topped with cheese.

The croutons: Sauté 1" bread cubes (rye or herbed are especially nummy) in some butter and minced garlic. Spread onto a cookie sheet and bake at 325 degrees for 15 minutes, stirring once or twice.

ONION AND GARLIC BEER SOUP--This absolutely delicious recipe appeared in the Willy Street Coop newsletter sometime in the late 1990s and remains a favorite.

4 lbs. sweet onions, thin sliced (about 10 medium)
4 large cloves garlic, minced
2 TBS. olive oil
1 x 12 oz. bottle of beer (not dark)
5 1/4 cups beef broth (3 x 14.5 oz. cans)
2 TBS. sugar
2 TBS. butter
4 slices of day old bread, cut into 1/2" cubes
fresh parmesan cheese

In a large kettle, cook the onion and garlic in the oil over medium heat, until lightly browned, stirring occasionally (about 30-40 minutes). Stir in the beer and broth and simmer, covered, 45 minutes. Stir in the sugar and season with salt and pepper to taste. While the soup simmers, melt the butter in a skillet on medium heat. Add the bread and cook, stirring, until the croutons are golden. Serve the soup, topped with croutons and sprinkled with parmesan.

NEW PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT--Each month we will spotlight some new product that we already carry or one that we've taken note of and plan to carry in the near future. Likewise, if you would like to see Klein's to carry a product that we don't currently, please let us know. Our goal is to be responsive to the marketplace and to our loyal clientele. If a product fits into our profile, we will make every effort to get it into our store. In addition, we may be able to special order an item for you, whether plant or hard good, given enough time. This month's new product is:

Nature's Splendor™ from Rush Creek Designs, Inc.

"For those who find joy in Home and Garden"

Klein's is happy to announce the addition of Nature's Splendor to our collection of unique gift items. Nature's Splendor is a series of unbelievably lifelike resin leaves and foliage that are very eye-catching for both home and garden. Among others, choose stunning examples of hosta and begonia leaves. All are very reasonably priced. Black, wrought iron display racks are also available at Klein's to show off your Nature's Splendor collection. The perfect gift for the gardener in your life who has everything.

From the Rush Creek web site at www.rushcreekdesigns.com

"Celebrate the essence of life in each unique creation of Nature's Splendor. My originals have been hand-cast directly from the glory of nature. Fresh colours have been hand painted on each piece to preserve the majesty its Creator intended. I sincerely hope you will enjoy the natural beauty that each piece will bring to your life".

L. Hulst

"Rush Creek Designs is a premier manufacturer of high quality home and garden products specially made with the independent retailer in mind. All of our products are manufactured to the highest standards with no detail overlooked".

NATURAL NEWS--This column devotes itself to organic techniques, products, pest control, etc.--anything that educates us on the means to protect our environment.

Go Green Wisconsin!

Madison, WI — In response to the growing interest in green living and lifestyles, Morgan Murphy Media (Channel3000.com, Madison Magazine, My Madison TV and WISGTV3) announced the creation of a two-part Going Green Wisconsin initiative—a September 2007 launch of the new website goinggreenwisconsin.com and the area's first Going Green Wisconsin Expo.

About the Going Green Wisconsin Expo

The Going Green Wisconsin Expo will serve as the premier green lifestyle show in the state. The event, scheduled for May 2-4, 2008, in the Exhibition Hall at the Alliant Energy Center, will showcase diverse local and national green businesses displaying and selling ecofriendly, fair trade and sustainable products. It will also feature an exciting lineup of local and national environmental and socially conscious speakers.

To sign up to receive information on exhibiting or presenting at the Going Green Wisconsin Expo, contact Tiffany Thom at (608) 270-3632 or tthom@madisonmagazine.com

About goinggreenwisconsin.com

In September 2007, Morgan Murphy Media launched an exciting new web resource, goinggreenwisconsin.com. The website acts as the main source of communication to Wisconsin citizens on how to enhance daily living in a green-conscious way with ideas, information and detailed stories. The website features local business efforts, simple tips for living green, and informative stories from Morgan Murphy Media's journalists on the latest green movement trends. Special television and magazine coverage complements the website's efforts by highlighting environmental issues and ideas in the going green movement.

JANUARY'S PLANT OF THE MONTH:

SANSEVERIA (Mother-in-Law's Tongue)

Also known as Snake Plant, this very adaptable succulent is perfect for the beginner and for people with a brown thumb. For the experienced, sanseveria's dramatic presentation and ease in care make it a must have in every home. Being tolerant of very low light, sanseveria is one of few choices for the workplace, office and shopping centers, where good light is often a rarity. Their preference though is a bright indirect light and are tolerant of even high light locations. Mother-in-laws tongues thrive on neglect. In fact, their greatest downfall is their lack of tolerance for 'wet feet'. Kept too moist, or allowed to stand in water, the plant will surely rot. During the summer months, plants should be watered thoroughly when dry to the touch. But during the winter, they can remain nearly bone dry, increasing watering as the days lengthen in late February. Sanseveria attracts few pests. Mealy bugs can be their biggest enemy but are easily controlled. Dust is easily removed from the leathery leaves with a damp cloth. Varieties range in height from 4" to up to 4'. Foliage is generally a rich green marked with grays or yellows. Tall, deep green

varieties with bright yellow margins are especially eye-catching. Plants are extremely long-lived and often times outlive their owner and are passed down amongst family members. Sanseverias are easily propagated in the spring by splitting up and repotting crowded plants. Leaf sections can also be readily rooted. Flowering is sporadic and appears most often on mature and overcrowded plants. This member of the agave family hails from Africa east to Southeast Asia.

Klein's currently carries a nice selection of sanseverias, especially the larger specimens, and all are currently on sale from 35-50% off.

YOU ASKED. . .

My home seems so bland and lifeless during the winter months. What can I grow to bring a little color and a bit of the garden into my home?

In my own home I always have something in bloom and your choices are many—keeping in mind that for any plant to bloom well, they need a bright location. Given a bright location, your next concern is temperature. Some plants bloom best in warmer situations (60 degrees and above), while others prefer cooler locations (below 60 degrees) and will actually bloom best during the winter. Right now, many of my holiday plants are still in full bloom, including poinsettias, amaryllis, holiday cactus and paperwhites. Most will stay in bloom for weeks to come.

For cool locations, such as cool rooms and near windows (where cold temps radiate from the glass) cyclamen, azaleas, cinerarias, jasmine, cymbidium orchids, oxalis, pocket flowers and primrose are all excellent choices. All of these are currently available at Klein's or will become available in the coming weeks. Many succulents and cacti also bloom well during the winter months in cool temps. Favorites of mine include orchid cacti (available by mail order), crown-of-thorns and many of the barrel cacti. Another favorite is clivia. This gorgeous orange-flowered amaryllis relative seldom appears at local garden centers, but is readily available by mail order. Though expensive, these long-lived treasures are a great investment. Mine bloom twice each season—once during the late winter and then again in early summer when I place the pots in my shade garden.

My forced bulbs—tulips, daffodils, hyacinths and crocus are also nearing the end of their cooling period in my basement refrigerator. In just a few weeks my windowsills will burst with spring cheer. I bring out a few pots each week from now through early April so I have continuous indoor bloom until my spring bulbs start blooming in the garden.

Speaking of gardens, I also bring in some plants that I know bloom all winter. These include geraniums, begonias, gerber daisies, fuchsia, streptocarpus, streptocarpella, bridal veil, impatiens, browallia, flowering maple, lantana, passion vine and many others. They all bloom reliably in the average home, given a bright location and proper watering. If you don't have the room for the parent plant from last summer, take some cuttings. Geraniums, impatiens, begonias and flowering maples are especially easy. The smaller plants are much easier to display.

For warmer locations in the home, nothing beats orchids for bringing the tropics indoors. Visit a local retailer now to see what is currently in bloom. This will usually indicate the bloom time in years to come. Though some say they're fussy, African violets remain one of the most popular winter bloomers and they're one of the few choices that bloom well under artificial fluorescent light.

As you see, the choices are truly many. Visit Klein's during these cold, dreary days of winter and let us help you brighten your home for the many even colder and drearier days ahead. Rick

AROUND TOWN:

NOTE: If you know of any community or neighborhood events or garden tours you would like posted on

our web site in our monthly newsletters, please contact Rick at (608) 2445661. Please include all details, i.e. dates, locations, prices, brief description, etc. Our readership is ever-growing so this is a great opportunity for free advertising. Events must be garden related and must take place in the immediate Madison vicinity.

Dane County Winter Farmer's Market
Saturdays, January 6 thru April 14, 8:00-noon
Madison Senior Center
330 W. Mifflin
For details visit www.madfarmmkt.org

Olbrich's Garden's
Bolz Conservatory Exhibit-Mystical Medicine
September 5 through January 5, 2008
Daily from 10:00-4:00, Sundays 10:00-5:00
In the Bolz Conservatory

Come learn about the psychoactive properties of plants. Some rain forest plants have special properties useful for zombification, voodoo, hallucinogenic drugs, and shamanic medicine. "Mystical Medicine" will share the findings of famous ethnobotanists who have studied these special properties. Admission to the Conservatory is \$1.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave., Madison
608/246-4550 or www.olbrich.org for details

21st Annual Orchid Quest 2008
Saturday, February 2, 10:00-5:00
Sunday, February 3, 10:00-4:00

Vendors and education seminars from orchid experts have everything you need including literature, growing media, fertilizer and orchid pots. \$6 admission for one day and \$9 admission for twodays. Visit www.orchidguild.org for more information.

Alliant Energy Center Exhibition Hall
1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Madison, WI 53713
608/267-3976 or www.alliantenergycenter.com

15th Annual Wisconsin Public Television Garden Expo
Friday, February 8, 4:00-9:00
Saturday, February 9, 8:00-6:00
Sunday, February 10, 10:00-4:00

Walk through the custom garden display, attend demonstrations and seminars, register for workshops and view over 400 different exhibitors. One and two day tickets are available at the door or in advance from Klein's. Visit www.wpt.org/gardenexpo for more information. Meet Shelley Ryan, master gardener and producer/host of The Wisconsin Gardener series, UWExtension experts, and Master Gardeners. All show proceeds, including admission fee, support Wisconsin Public Television programming. Garden Expo also meets WPT's educational and community outreach mission.

Alliant Energy Center Exhibition Hall

1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Madison, WI 53713
608/267-3976 or www.alliantenergycenter.com

JANUARY IN THE GARDEN--A checklist of things to do this month.

- _____ Pick up a copy of the 2008 Wisconsin Garden Journal at bookstores.
- _____ Place your used Christmas tree in the garden for added wildlife protection.
- _____ Inspect stored summer bulbs like dahlias, cannas and glads for rotting.
- _____ Check for and treat for pests on plants brought in from the garden.
- _____ Begin forcing stored elephant's ears at the end of January.
- _____ Keep birdfeeders full. Clean periodically with soap and water.
- _____ Inventory last year's leftover seeds before ordering new ones.
- _____ Order your seeds. By ordering early, there are usually freebies & discounts.
- _____ Start certain slow-growers like lisianthus, geraniums, pentas and bananas.
- _____ Shop for summer bulbs like begonias, caladium, calla and elephant's ears.
- _____ Use the winter days to plan next summer's garden.
- _____ Check your garden for any plant damage from weather or rodents.
- _____ Have trees trimmed--it's often times cheaper and easier to schedule.
- _____ Visit Klein's---it's green, it's warm, it's colorful---it's always spring.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT KLEIN'S--This is a sneak peek of what is going on each month behind the scenes in our greenhouses. Many people are unaware that our facility operates year round or that we have 10 more greenhouses on the property in addition to the 6 open for retail. At any given moment we already have a jump on the upcoming season--be it poinsettias in July, geraniums in December or fall mums in May.

IN JANUARY:

- This is the quietest month at the greenhouse. All 10 greenhouses in our back range have been shut down to save on energy and prep them for all the spring plants that start arriving in February.
- We take advantage of the warm and sunny rooms in our front range (the retail area) to do any touch up painting or construction to ready ourselves for the spring season.
- We begin stepping up our geranium cuttings into larger pots, pouches and hanging baskets.
- We spend much of our time ordering product for next summer, from plants to pottery to garden ornaments and sundries.
- We begin to access our needs for spring staffing and try to have the new people in place and trained by March 1. March and April are the busiest months behind the scenes in the greenhouse and we rely on a dedicated, hardworking team to have everything ready for the customer come May 1 and the spring onslaught.
- Hundreds of herbs for windowsill culture are thriving in the sunny, warm greenhouses. We have chosen only the best assortment for indoor growing and winter harvest. Choose from rosemary, lavender, parsley, thyme and more.
- We continue to plan and prepare for Wisconsin Public Television's Garden Expo at the Alliant Energy Center in February by sprucing up display pieces and potting up thousands of violas, primrose, cineraria, etc. for sale at the show. This is Klein's biggest annual event and our most important advertising.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE OF THE MONTH--CATIE FISCHER

Catie's love for nature and plants is truly profound. Most choices made in her life regarding education and career stem from that love. This passion is deep rooted in her genes and upbringing. Unlike many of our coworkers, Catie comes from a long line of gardeners and nature lovers. Catie's father, Tim, grew up on a farm, therefore explaining her amazing work ethic. But it was her mother, Pat, and maternal grandfather who passed on to Catie their love of plants and gardening. Her grandfather especially enjoyed raising a variety of fruits and some wildflowers. Her mother, on the other hand, enjoys all flowers and especially perennials.

Catie herself is not a farm girl, growing up in the sprawling metropolis of Wausau. Though not a farm kid, Catie joined Wausau East's FFA (Future Farmers of America) program during high school. At the time, it was her love of animals that lured her in. After graduation in 2002, Catie moved to Madison where she

began her studies at the University of Wisconsin thinking about a future degree in art. It was a 300 Level elective science course on plant propagation that changed everything for her. She says she has always enjoyed the science side of learning, but it was botany in particular that grabbed her attention. Life took a different direction and in May of 2007, Catie graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Natural Resources--a part of the horticulture department. During Catie's tenure at the UW she was fortunate to have a paid summer position at the renowned Allen Centennial Gardens on the university campus. After graduating she received a prestigious summer internship at Olbrich Botanical Gardens here in Madison (the highest rated public gardens in the United States in 2007) under the tutelage of Jeff Epping.

Catie joined the Klein's team during the spring of 2004. She says she happened to be driving past Klein's on her way from Wausau after spring break when she saw that we were hiring for seasonal partime cashier help. Until that point, Catie hadn't searched out employment at a greenhouse or garden center, but realized it was yet another great opportunity. She was hired immediately. That one time seasonal position has, in the meantime, become a semi-permanent, nearly full-time position. Catie now finds herself in an almost supervisory role, essentially running the retail areas during her shifts and training new employees as they join our team. Her knowledge and experience are an integral part of the Klein shopping experience.

What's next? In the short term, Catie will be learning about and heavily involved in the growing and production end of our business under the guidance our expert grower, Jamie Vanden Wymelenberg. She says she wants to learn about the behind the scenes aspect of growing the plant material she has been so involved in selling all these years in our retail area.

In the long term, Catie hopes to become a grower herself someday. She says that before that time, she hopes to live in and work in several regions of the country before settling down...the Northwest, New England and the Deep South--all to add to her already vast repertoire of knowledge. But in the coming months, expect to find Catie on the sales floor this spring, answering all of your toughest questions and assisting you with all of your gardening needs.

THE CRITIC'S CORNER BY RICK HALBACH--Recommended readings and other media for the garden novice or enthusiast.

Cyndi's Catalog of Garden Catalogs at www.gardenlist.com
From Cyndi Johnson's web site:

"The home gardener's one stop to find all the mailorder gardening catalogs in the US and Canada- over 2000 of them! Check here first to find the company and see its ratings for quality, service, price and breadth of varieties. Plus links to mail-order companies outside North America, and other gardeningrelated sites".

I'm obsessed with garden catalogs of all types--seeds, plants, books, tools, supplies--you name it. I collect and hoard them and once the spring catalogs begin arriving during December, I page through many of them almost daily.

I inventory last season's remaining seeds, reread my notes from my garden journals and begin my plan of attack for the new season. Highlighter in hand, I scour the catalogs for all that is new and exciting and must have in my garden for the new season. I search for old friends and standbys that have never let me down. I read and reread plant descriptions, hoping to squeeze new treasures into my already densely packed landscape. In addition, I then reread the catalogs again from an entirely different perspective. And since I work at a garden center, I use my many catalogs to improve the Klein's shopping experience for the customer. I suggest new plants and hard goods that I see in the catalogs--those that fit into the Klein's product profile. I collect plant information for our spring plant list that appears on our web site. But most of all, I try to absorb every speck of information I can from my catalogs that I might be able to share with my customers come spring.

If you're interested in taking the plunge into the world of garden catalogs, Cyndi's Catalog of Garden

Catalogs is the BEST place to start. The site is easy to navigate with few frills. It simply lists thousands of garden related catalog sources with detailed product descriptions and services offered. Most important though, are the ratings for product quality, service, price and variety. From my own personal experience with many of the companies listed, Cyndi's ratings are dead on. Addresses and phone numbers are supplied, if you'd like to acquire a catalog the old-fashioned way, but on-line contact information is simply a handy link direct to the supplier. In addition, there are direct links for specialty catalogs, including; specific plants, organics, houseplants, supplies & tools, garden decor and even wholesale. The choices are endless. The Cyndi's Catalog web site has become one of my favorites.

PERMANENT FEATURES-

KLEIN'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Have our monthly newsletter e-mailed to you automatically by signing up on the right side of our home page. We'll offer monthly tips, greenhouse news and tidbits, specials and recipes. . . everything you need to know from your favorite Madison greenhouse. And tell your friends. It's easy to do.

SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT

We offer a 10% Off Senior Citizen Discount every Tuesday to those 62 and above. This discount is not in addition to other discounts or sales. Please mention that you are a senior before we ring up your purchases. Does not apply to wire out orders or services, i.e. delivery, potting, etc.

BUCKY BOOK COUPON

Klein's is again showing our proud support of UW Athletics with advertising and coupons in the 2008 edition of the Bucky Book.

DELIVERY INFO

Klein's Floral and Greenhouses delivers daily, except Sundays, throughout all of Madison and much of Dane County including: Cottage Grove, DeForest, Maple Bluff, McFarland, Middleton, Monona, Oregon, Shorewood Hills, Sun Prairie, Verona, Waunakee and Windsor. Current delivery rate on 1-4 items is \$6.95 for Madison, Maple Bluff, Monona and Shorewood Hills, slightly more to the surrounding communities and for more than 4 items. We not only deliver our fabulous fresh flowers, but also houseplants, bedding plants and sundries. We offer free delivery to all Madison hospitals and funeral homes.

Morning delivery is guaranteed to the following Madison zip codes, but only if requested: 53703, 53704, 53713, 53714, 53716, 53718 and Cottage Grove, DeForest, Maple Bluff, McFarland, Monona, Sun Prairie, Waunakee and Windsor. We begin our delivery day at 8:00 a.m. and end at approximately 4:00 p.m. Except during holidays, the following westside zip codes and communities can be delivered only during the afternoon: 53705, 53706, 53711, 53717, 53719, 53726, Middleton, Oregon, Shorewood Hills and Verona. During holidays (Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, etc.) we are able to make morning deliveries to all of the above areas. We are not able to take closely timed deliveries on any holiday due to the sheer volume of such requests. It's best to give us a range of time and we'll try our absolute hardest. Orders for same day delivery must be placed by 12:30 p.m. or by 2:30 p.m. for Madison zip codes 53704 and 53714.

DEPARTMENT HEADS: Please refer all questions, concerns or feedback in the following departments to their appropriate supervisor.

Phone: 608/244-5661 or 888/244-5661

Floral Department Manager Kathy Lehman

(kathy@kleinsfloral.com)

Head Grower & Horticulturist Jamie VandenWymelenberg

(jamie@kleinsfloral.com)

Assistant Grower Craig Johnson

Retail Manager Jennifer Wadyka

(jennifer@kleinsfloral.com)

House Accounts & Billing Barbara Foulk

Delivery Supervisor Rick Halbach

Owner Sue (Klein) Johnson
(sue@kleinsfloral.com)

RELATED RESOURCES AND WEB SITES

University of Wisconsin Extension
1 Fen Oak Ct. #138
Madison, WI 53718
608/224-3700
www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/
www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort

Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic
Dept. of Plant Pathology
1630 Linden Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
www.plantpath/wisc.edu

Insect Diagnostic Lab
240 Russell Labs
1630 Linden Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
www.entomology.wisc.edu/entodiag.html

State Soil Testing Lab
5711 Mineral Point Rd.
Madison, WI 53705
608/262-4364
www.soils.wisc.edu

American Horticultural Society
www.ahs.org

Garden Catalogs (an extensive list with links)
www.gardenlist.com

Herbicides and Pesticides
www.extoxnet.orst.edu

Invasive Species
www.invasive.org

Friends of Troy Gardens
Rm. 171, Bldg. 14
3601 Memorial Dr.
Madison, WI 53704
608/240-0409
www.troygardens.org

Community Gardens Division (Madison area)
Community Action Coalition
1717 N. Stoughton Rd.
Madison, WI 53704

608/246-4730
www.cacsw.org

Madison Area Master Gardeners (MAMGA)
www.madison.com/communities/mamga

Wisconsin Master Gardeners Program
www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener

The Wisconsin Gardener
www.wpt.org/garden/
Has a list of garden clubs and societies

Allen Centennial Gardens
620 Babcock Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
608/262-8406
www.horticulture.wisc.edu/allencentennialgardens/index.htm

Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave.
Madison, WI 53704
608/246-4550
www.olbrich.org

Rotary Gardens
1455 Palmer Dr.
Janesville, WI 53545
608/752-3885
www.rotarygardens.org

University of WI Arboretum
1207 Seminole Hwy.
Madison, WI 53711
608/263-7888
www.uwarboretum.org

University of Wisconsin-West Madison
Agricultural Research Center
8502 Mineral Point Rd.
Verona, WI 53593
608/262-2257
www.cals.wisc.edu/westmad/